



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of Specialized Instruction

December 2013

DCPS River Terrace School Plans

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Version 2

Project Information:

- **Modernization of existing facility – Area: 40,000 SF**
- **Completion of building addition – Area: 30,000 SF**
- **Completed facility – Total Area: 70,000 SF**
- **Projected date of completion – Existing facility modernization: August 2014**
- **Completed facility design capacity – Students: 160**
(Includes educational activities and Career Development Center (CDC))

General Project Timelines and Questions:

1. What is the vision for this project?

DCPS plans to consolidate Sharpe Health School and Mamie D. Lee School into one school at the River Terrace Elementary School site. This site will be a model school for students with profound intellectual disabilities. This includes students who have multiple diagnoses to include intellectual disability, as well as one or more the following: medical complexity, visual or hearing impairment, and autism.

2. Who are the project team members?

DGS Project Managers:	Eupert Braithwaite & Alan Austin
Architects and Engineers:	Bryant Mitchell & Fanning Howey
Design/Builders:	TBD via the solicitation process
DCPS/OSI Contact:	Richard Rogers

3. If I have questions about this project, who should I contact?

DGS Point of Contact:	Eupert Braithwaite, Project Manager E-mail: eupert.braithwaite@dc.gov
DCPS Point of Contact:	Richard Rogers, Director, Academic Supports Office of Specialized Instruction (OSI) E-mail: richard.rogers@dc.gov

4. What is the projected completion date of the modernization?

The Department of General Services (DGS) has committed to finishing the modernization phase by August 2014.

5. What will be done with the two current sites (Sharpe Health School and Mamie D. Lee School)?

Currently, no plans have been developed for either of the two sites.

6. Will the existing Sharpe Health School and Mamie D. Lee School sites be available for summer Extended School Year (ESY) programming?

ESY will still occur for all students who have this service prescribed in their IEP. The location of services for this summer's program will be determined by late December. This information will be communicated via the DCPS website and direct mailings to families.

7. Is there enough space at the new site for students?

Full modernization is planned for the River Terrace School as well as a newly constructed addition to the existing school building. In addition to classroom spaces, there will be actual spaces for a life skills suite, OT/PT room, sensory rooms, medical/dental suites, outdoor play areas, parking, etc.

8. What is evacuation process for the new site?

The Architecture and Engineering Team has designed gathering spaces and walking paths within the fenced area of the modernized site leading to the intersection of 34th Street NE and Dix Street NE. The DGS Safety Office will develop a process for the evacuation of students and train the staff on implement the required procedures.

Programming and Services Questions:

1. What will be the projected enrollment for the River Terrace School?

The River Terrace School will serve up to 160 students, ages 5-21.

2. How will it be determined which students from Sharpe Health School and Mamie D. Lee School will attend the River Terrace School?

Individual IEP teams will determine eligibility. Eligibility will be based on the level of student need and readiness for inclusion. There is room for all current Sharpe Health School and Mamie D. Lee School students at the new school site. However, the determination about which students will attend the River Terrace School and which students will attend their neighborhood school will be made by each student's IEP team, which includes students' parents. This will occur on an ongoing basis. Additional guidance on the student population can be found in the *DCPS Special Education Programs and Resources Guide*. More information on programming for student with disabilities in neighborhood schools will be available soon on the DCPS website.

3. Will the school only serve students who currently attend Sharpe Health School or Mamie D. Lee School or will it be open to families from around the city?

Other DCPS students may matriculate to the River Terrace School through the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) process from a self-contained special education setting.

4. What types of services will be provided for students at the River Terrace School?

Services at the new River Terrace School will include technology integration, aquatic therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, behavior therapy, life skills, and career skills; related services will be provided based on the students' IEPs. Career skills will be taught in the new Career Development Center (CDC).

5. If a student transitions back to his or her neighborhood school, will they still be provided all of the services outlined on their IEP?

Yes. DCPS has focused on expanding the capacity of our district-wide Intellectual Disability Support Programs located throughout the city. A student transitioning back to his or her neighborhood school will still be provided the full support outlined in his or her IEP. Related Service Providers also serve students at all DCPS schools. DCPS will ensure that students receive the required services as prescribed in their IEP.

6. Will transportation be provided to the school and job training sites?

DCPS will provide transportation per the students' IEPs.

7. How will information be given to families and the community about the project and impending transition? On what timeline will this be available?

The SIT meetings will continue throughout the year to solicit feedback from the community members and parents. DCPS is invested in having feedback from all stakeholders to ensure this is a successful project. As the meetings continue, a full plan will be formed.

8. Will all students who begin attending the new River Terrace School remain there until graduation?

Not necessarily. IEP teams should discuss the student's least restrictive environment at every annual IEP meeting. If the team determines it's appropriate, the student may transition back to his or her neighborhood school at any point in the future.

Career Development Center (CDC) Question:

1. What career clusters will be offered at the Career Development Center (CDC)?

Students attending the Career Development Center will have the opportunity to explore one of the following career clusters: health services, administrative support/hospitality, or landscaping/horticulture.

Community Access Questions:

1. When the River Terrace School opens, will the community be able to continue to access the gymnasium to use as a meeting space?

Yes, DCPS is committed to community partnerships. The River Terrace community is encouraged to collaborate with the River Terrace School leadership to build partnerships in accordance with DCPS building use policies.

2. Will the River Terrace Community have use of the gymnasium during construction?

The site will be unsafe to use during construction due to the lack of power and restroom facilities; however, when construction is complete, the River Terrace community should work with the school on a schedule for using the gymnasium.

3. Will the community be able to access the pool?

The pool being built at the River Terrace School is intended to be an “aquatic therapy” pool. Aquatic therapy is the use of water and activity by qualified personnel to restore, extend, and maintain physical functions for students with disabilities. An aquatic therapy pool is not intended for recreational or athletic usage.

4. Will DCPS implement all of the recommendations made by the community during the SIT process?

DCPS is first and foremost committed to building a school that can serve the needs of its incoming student population. As much as possible, DGS and DCPS would like to incorporate suggestions made by the community while still ensuring the River Terrace School can fully serve its students.